



BRITISH EMBASSY
BRASILIA

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18 June 1982

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FCO

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Dee Kopf

VULCAN DIVERSION TO BRAZIL

1. I think you will be interested to see the attached copy of a letter by our Air Attaché, Jerry Brown, reporting on his sojourn down in Rio with the famous Vulcan, as it highlights some of the more beneficial aspects of the incident.
2. Can I leave it to you to copy this to anyone else in the FCO who you think will be interested?

Yes
aj

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16 June 1982

VULCAN DIVERSION TO BRAZIL

1. When the Falklands conflict was imminent, it was regrettably necessary to postpone the planned Nimrod visit to Brazil, although I still have hopes that we may be able to re-schedule it later in the year. However, as I know you are aware, a Vulcan aircraft unexpectedly diverted into Galeão Airport, Rio de Janeiro on 3 Jun. It was of course unfortunate that an aircraft and a crew of six officers were then 'lost' in terms of the war effort for 8 days whilst the Brazilian Government made up its mind how to respond to the situation and, more specifically, to the Argentine Note, but I felt you would like to know that in my view the occasion was turned to advantage and was in the event an extremely useful exercise in terms of goodwill and RAF/FAB relations.
2. After some initial apprehension the crew, who really had little idea as to what sort of reception they would get, were agreeably surprised to discover just how friendly Brazilians really are. Whatever the politicians may say here, with the exception of a mere handful, the Brazilian Air Force officers I have met have appeared privately to be solidly behind our efforts further South and we received nothing but friendship and co-operation throughout the Vulcan crews' stay.
3. This friendliness may explain the great deal of pressure we came under to go off the station and relax. We resisted these offers and took care to maintain a round-the-clock guard on the aircraft. It would have been wrong not only for security reasons, but would have encouraged the view that we were in no hurry to get the aircraft away. Eventually our point of view was accepted.
4. The crew integrated well and many FAB officers commented to me on the high level of professionalism displayed and maintained throughout by the RAF. While one crew member remained permanently with the aircraft invitations were accepted to visit units on the base and to participate in social functions. The highlight of the week in my view was when, having decided to hold a small lunch-time drinks party to celebrate the Queens Birthday on 9 Jun and to which I invited selected station officers and two Brigadeiros, the outgoing Chief of Air Staff who happened to be there on that day delivered a speech saying what a great pleasure it was to have the RAF crew there, and insisted on toasting Her Majesty's health himself. All the officers on the base raised their glasses and a more solid gesture of friendship and support I have yet to see here.

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5. It is interesting to reflect, as I near the end of my tour in Brazil, that some of the most memorable moments for me have been associated with those occasions when the RAF has visited, most notably the visit of Chief of Air Staff last year, the VC 10 carrying Lord Carrington in Jul 80, and now the Vulcan, apart from others as well. The Vulcan may have caused the Brazilian Government some embarrassment but as an unscheduled, wholly unexpected visit, from my point of view it was a bonus! I should be delighted if that sentiment were to be conveyed to a higher level if you felt it appropriate.

6. Finally, the question of the measures taken to safeguard the missile, to reduce publicity to an acceptable minimum and so on, will be the subject of a separate report I am writing for HMA and I shall of course forward a copy to you.

JL

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